



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES

## Wondering What The "UEP Certified" Logo Means?

You may have noticed labels on your egg cartons that read "United Egg Producers Certified." What you may not know is that they refer to a voluntary egg industry program that permits factory farmers to intensively confine hens in barren, wire "battery cages" so small the birds can barely move—let alone engage in many other important natural behaviors, such as nesting, foraging, or even spreading their wings. The guidelines recommend cage space less than the size of a piece of paper—just 67 square inches—for each bird.

The United Egg Producers (UEP), the industry trade group responsible for the certification program, has a history of misleading consumers about the treatment of laying hens. In fact, the Better Business Bureau ruled (and upheld upon appeal) that the UEP engaged in misleading advertising related to animal welfare. And in late 2006, the UEP paid a \$100,000 fine to settle false advertising claims by 16 state attorney general offices and the Washington, D.C., attorney general.

The bottom line: Battery cage eggs are simply too inhumane for any socially-responsible company or person to support. Is saving a few pennies on an egg worth forcing a bird to live her entire life in a space smaller than the size of a sheet of paper? If you don't think so, please don't buy eggs from caged birds.

### **You Can Help**

Factory farmers are hoping that merely having a certification program will ease consumer concern about the abuse of egg-laying hens. However, the United Egg Producers' program permits many of the worst abuses of modern agribusiness, including intensive confinement in battery cages.

With your buying power, you can help push the egg industry toward meaningful improvements to its notoriously poor record on animal welfare.

1. Don't buy eggs from caged birds. If the carton doesn't say Certified Humane, Free Farmed, Certified Organic, cage-free, or free-range, the eggs are almost certainly from hens confined in battery cages.
2. Ask your grocer not to carry eggs from caged birds. Several major chains, including Whole Foods Market, have already adopted policies against selling battery cage eggs.

For more information, visit [www.EggLabels.com](http://www.EggLabels.com).



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To: The Honorable Mike Simpson, Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture

From: Cal Morgan, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Michigan Humane Society

Date: June 24, 2009

Re: HB 5127 and HB 5128

The Michigan Humane Society (MHS) wishes to share our initial reactions with you and the entire committee after reviewing HB5127 and HB5128, both of which we read for the first time upon their introduction just yesterday. It is too early for MHS to take a position on these bills given their scope and the complexity of the issues they seek to address; however, we have significant concerns about several aspects in each one and are therefore unable to support them as written at this time.

MHS is both concerned about the welfare of livestock *and* recognizes the importance of animal agriculture in our state. We feel that promoting productive dialogue among the many stakeholders on this issue is the best approach to ensuring the welfare of animals on farms. However, these two bills essentially preclude such dialogue and the sharing of perspectives other than that of animal industry. Where in HB5128 is the representation of the average Michigan consumer who wants assurance that their food is humanely produced? Why is there only a single representative from the entire animal welfare field on the proposed advisory council? Instead, the bill establishes a serious conflict of interest by proscribing that the majority of the voting council seats be reserved for industries which stand to gain financially from minimizing regulation and oversight.

MHS believes in the humane handling and care of farm animals during every stage of their lives. The standards that Michigan adopts for its livestock industry should address farm animals' needs along with the needs of farmers. However, the way that HB5127 is currently designed prevents any animal welfare standards outside of those developed by the agriculture industry from being introduced into the discussion. At least three other national organizations have produced farm animal welfare standards that provide this important perspective (American Humane Association, Humane Farm Animal Care, and Animal Welfare Institute), yet these standards are completely ignored by the bill. By mandating the adoption of named industry guidelines (some written as many as eight years ago), by delaying their full implementation until 2020, and by prohibiting their review until 2025, the bill would effectively eliminate consideration of new and developing practices in animal

agriculture over the next 16 years. We should not risk allowing our state's farming practices to become outdated in this way.

Another significant concern we have about HB5127 is that it removes all local ability to investigate complaints of cruelty to farm animals brought forth by citizens. Our many state-recognized animal control officers and animal cruelty investigators, along with local law enforcement, make up a statewide system that is able to respond quickly and professionally to reports of abuse of horses and other livestock. There are numerous recent examples of such abuse being reported by local residents and prosecuted successfully in our state. We question the ability of the Department of Agriculture to dedicate the resources necessary to replace such a broad-based system of local enforcement, especially given the current economic situation. Michigan's anti-cruelty laws are well-established and frequently cited as some of the best in the nation. MHS feels strongly that these bills as written would weaken these laws and result in farm animals losing protection from abuse.

Finally, we wish to emphasize that although MHS is named in HB5128, we were not consulted in advance and did not give our permission for our name to be used in the bill.

Michigan Humane Society supports a balanced and fair approach, collaborative in nature, to move ahead on farm animal welfare in our state. We look forward to discussing our concerns about these two bills individually with committee members. MHS welcomes the opportunity to suggest changes to the bills that would create a viable collaboration among all stakeholders, promote the humane treatment of farm animals, and maintain the health of the animal agriculture industry in Michigan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. S.' or similar, with a stylized, flowing script.